



AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

The attached sheet of drawing includes changes to FIG. 6.

Attachments: One Replacement Sheet - FIG. 6
 [One Annotated Sheet Showing Changes - FIG. 6]

REMARKS

The specification has been amended to include a phrase inadvertently omitted from the International Application No. PCT/BR2003/000165 when it was filed on November 13, 2003. This International Application claims priority of Brazilian Application No. PI0204644-0 filed November 13, 2002. A certified copy of this priority document is on file in this case as set forth in the Notice of Acceptance of February 27, 2006. Enclosed is an English translation of this priority document. It can be seen from this translation that the phrase to be inserted on page 5 of this application is completely contained on page 5, line 28 of the translation. Accordingly and pursuant to Rule 1.57(a), it is submitted applicant is entitled to include this phrase in the specification at this time.

Also enclosed is a copy of FIG. 6 showing proposed corrections in red and a replacement copy of FIG. 6 incorporating these changes to avoid the Examiner's objection to the drawings. Support for these corrections can be found on page 5, lines 20-25 of the specification.

Finally, the claims have been amended to avoid the Examiner's rejections of the claims under §112, second paragraph and to more clearly claim applicant's invention and distinguish it from the cited prior art.

It is believed the amended claims avoid the §112 rejection, and its withdrawal as a ground of rejection of the claims is requested.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) for being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,328,356 to Aichmann. Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) for being obvious over Aichmann in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,588,961 to Farago. The indicated allowance of the subject matter of claims 6 and

7 is appreciated. However, it is believed amended claims 1-5 are patentable over the cited references for the following reasons

Aichmann does not show a seal that comprises a single part of thermoplastic material. Rather, Aichmann's seal includes at least three parts (3, 4, 4'), if not a fourth (11'). It also does not show a metallic insert element at least partially embedded in said thermoplastic material, but rather a metal insert element 5 that is received within retaining insert 4 which is closed by a separate part 4', as is clearly seen in Figure 3.

Moreover, Aichmann clearly does not show the single part of thermoplastic material having been manufactured by a plastic injection operation that also incorporates the metallic insert element into the structure of the body as claimed. In the product of Aichmann, metal insert 5 is simply contained in retaining insert 4 which in its turn is closed by a separate part 4', the two plastic parts 4 and 4' being contained in outer housing 3. A simple consideration of the drawings of Aichmann, and in particular Figures 3 and 4, make it clear that it would be impossible to injection mold the plastic parts in a single operation and much less so do it with the metal insert 5 in place. Consequently, it could not possibly have been incorporated into the product in a injection operation. Furthermore, the metal insert 5 of Aichmann is not "embedded" in the plastic material and thus in this sense is not incorporated into the structure of the molded body.

Accordingly, it is submitted that neither claim 1 nor claims 2-4 dependent therefrom are anticipated by Aichmann. Its withdrawal as a ground of rejection of the claims under §102 is therefore requested.

Concerning Farago, it may be that the reference discloses a two-pronged fork locking element, but it does not supply what is missing in Aichmann as outlined above.

Accordingly, since M.P.E.P. §2143 requires that all claimed elements be shown or suggested in the cited combination of references to establish a prima facie case of obviousness, it is submitted that claim 5, which is dependent from claim 1, cannot be considered obvious over Aichmann in view of Farago.

Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 5 under §103 is therefore also requested.

It is believed claims 1-7 are in condition for allowance.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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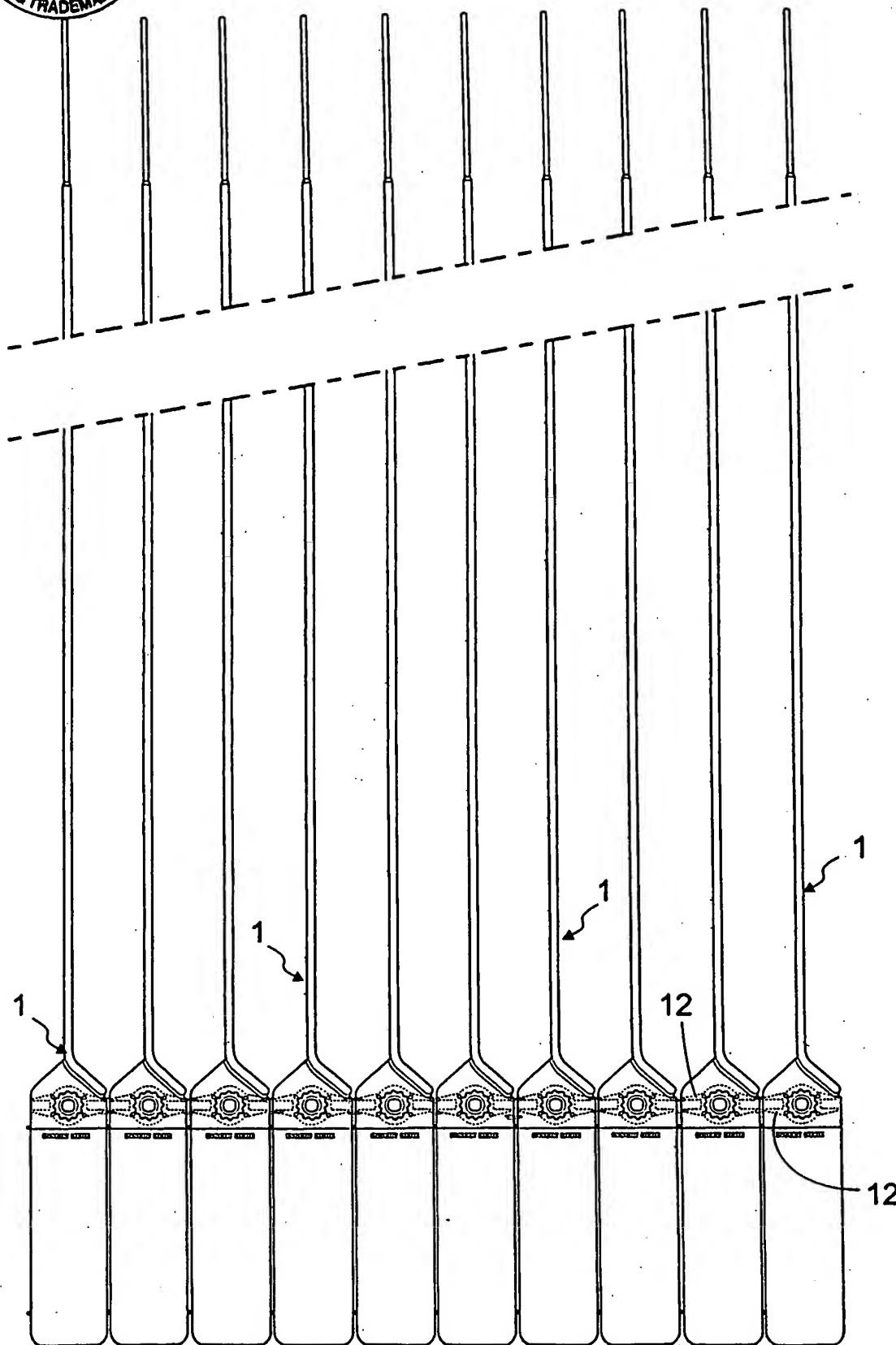
Dated: September 14, 2006

By: _____



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Attachments: **One Replacement Sheet - FIG. 6**
 [One Annotated Sheet Showing Changes - FIG. 6]
 English Translation of PI0204644-0



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FIG. 6